Ministry of Community Services

2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data
British Columbia. Ministry of Community Services.
Ministry of Community Services annual service plan report. —
2006/07/2008/09-

Annual.
Issued also in electronic version.
Continues: British Columbia. Ministry of Community Services.
Performance plan.
ISSN 1705-3757 = Ministry of Community Services
annual service plan report (Print)

1. British Columbia. Ministry of Community Services –
Periodicals. 2. Municipal Government – British Columbia –
Periodicals. 3. Community Development – Government policy – British
Columbia – Periodicals.
4. Women – Services for – British Columbia – Periodicals. 5. Older people – Services
for – British Columbia – Periodicals.
I. Title. II. Title: Ministry of Community Services 2006/07 annual service plan
report.

HV745.B7B74 353.53'31'0971105 C2002-960217-33

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Published by the Ministry of Community Services

2007-05618/

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

The Ministry of Community Services plays a pivotal role in making British Columbia the Best Place on Earth. We continue to work collaboratively with local governments, inner city residents, communities in transition and seniors' and women's organizations, in order to make this province the best place to live, work, invest and get ahead.

I have the honour to submit the Ministry of Community Services' Annual Service Plan Report for 2006/07. This report highlights our recent achievements as we move toward fulfilling the goals of our government and the Ministry.

In partnership with local governments, we are ensuring British Columbia has vibrant and sustainable communities that are greener, healthier and more active places to live. We are improving air and water quality, conserving energy and encouraging physical activity through four key programs announced by the Premier at the 2006 Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) annual convention. Our LocalMotion, Towns for Tomorrow, B.C. Spirit Squares and Green City Awards programs offer communities funding to support their green initiatives, with these programs building on B.C.'s Pacific Leadership Agenda and supporting ActNow BC.

Through our partnership with the federal government we have also been able to provide over $52 million from the federal Public Transit Capital Trust to UBCM for the new Public Transit Infrastructure Program, to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, supporting Government's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020.

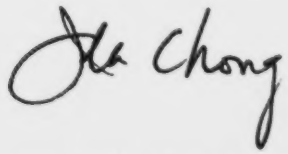
Supporting violence prevention and intervention services for women, and their children, fleeing abuse continues to be a priority. The Ministry provided more than $46 million for transition house services, safe homes, second stage housing, counselling, and many outreach services to connect vulnerable women with the services they may need. Our investment in nine projects through the $1.2 million Partners in Prevention initiative is helping to address the root causes of violence against women and girls by focusing on the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence. These grants build upon the $1 million Community Action for Women's Safety initiative which funded 52 organizations during 2005/06.

Another Ministry priority is to support women to achieve their highest potential. Our booming economy offers British Columbians vast opportunities and through our Empowered to Work mentoring initiative we have continued to successfully assist women to take advantage of these jobs, including the ever-expanding opportunities in construction, trades and other non-traditional fields.

The BladeRunners program continues as a Ministry success story, consistently exceeding annual targets. During 2006/07 the Ministry committed $2.4 million in funding, over three years, for BladeRunners programs. The program serves at-risk youth and provides the opportunity to gain experience and employment in the construction industry. We have expanded the BladeRunners program to Prince George, building on the successes of existing programs in Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Duncan and Ucluelet.

Seniors are the fastest growing demographic in British Columbia and we are committed to helping them live healthy, active and independent lives. Adapting successfully to an aging population will require the cooperation of many partners: from different orders of government, to industry, to the individual, we all have an important role to play. We are committed to providing the best system of supports for seniors in Canada. The Ministry plays a key role in helping the Province adapt to the needs of a changing demographic, by leading Government's comprehensive review of the Aging Well in British Columbia report, submitted to Government in December 2006 by the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues. Already, steps have been taken to abolish mandatory retirement — a key recommendation from the report. Looking forward, we continue to build on our already significant supports for seniors across British Columbia.

The Ministry of Community Services 2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Ida Chong, FCGA
Minister of Community Services and
Minister Responsible for Seniors' and Women's Issues

June 14, 2007

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Highlights of the Year

The Ministry of Community Services works to promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians to live, work and invest. Highlights of the Ministry's work in communities across the province of British Columbia during 2006/07 are listed below.

Local Government

Through strong partnerships with municipalities and regional districts, the Ministry of Community Services is helping to build vibrant and environmentally sustainable communities that are great places to live, work and invest. In 2006/07, four new Green Cities programs were promoted, providing $83.5 million to help create green, healthy and active communities. These programs build on British Columbia's Pacific Leadership Agenda and support ActNow BC, a province-wide health promotion initiative, by encouraging British Columbians to live healthier lives by being more physically active, eating better foods, living tobacco-free, maintaining a healthy weight and making healthy choices in pregnancy.

- Towns for Tomorrow provides infrastructure funding for British Columbia's smaller municipalities.
- LocalMotion supports cycling and pedestrian pathways that encourage physical fitness, safety and improved air quality in our communities.
- B.C. Spirit Squares will create or enhance outdoor public celebration spaces, for BC2008 and beyond.
- Green City Awards recognize local government practices that encourage physical activity, energy conservation, and environmental benefits.

The Public Transit Capital Trust, a new funding partnership between local, provincial and federal governments, was created to provide funds for improving public transit infrastructure. The initiative aims to reduce traffic congestion and pollution by increasing the use of public transit in British Columbia communities.

Resort Municipality Revenue Sharing

On March 29, 2007, the Ministry received Royal Assent for Bill 11, the legislative amendments necessary to implement the Resort Municipality Revenue Sharing Program. Under the program, eligible resort municipalities will receive a transfer of hotel room tax revenue for the purposes of long term investments in their resort municipality infrastructure.

The program will transfer approximately $10 million per year to qualifying resort municipalities. To date, agreements have been signed and announced with Whistler, Rossland and Golden. Other resort municipalities that qualify are Fernie, Harrison Hot Springs, Invermere, Kimberley, Osoyoos, Radium Hot Springs, Revelstoke, Tofino, Ucluelet and Valemount.

Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing

As part of a comprehensive strategy to enhance community policing, crime prevention and public safety, 100 per cent of all traffic fine revenues were returned to municipalities once again in 2006/07. Over $140 million has been disbursed to date, supporting the hiring of more than 450 police officers in municipalities across the province, and a number of other innovative safety initiatives.

Women

The Ministry of Community Services is committed to addressing the issue of violence against women. The highlights of this work during 2006/07 include:

Ministry of Community Services announces $1.2 M in Partners in Prevention Grants

"Through Partners in Prevention, we will launch a school-based program for boys in the Lower Mainland that builds mutual respect between girls and boys of all cultural backgrounds."

—Janet Austin, CEO, Vancouver YWCA

- A doubling of the number of instances where outreach services were accessed by women and their children in 2006/07 as the result of enhanced community awareness of the services (from 17,000 in 2005/06 to 41,000).
- A comprehensive investment in the prevention of violence against women and girls was made through Partners in Prevention. The Ministry supported innovative community-based projects that focus on the attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence. Priority was given to projects that engage men and boys. Nine B.C. organizations received grants of up to $150,000 for innovative strategies in prevention. For example, "Fantastic Fathers" works with men who have been abusive to stop the cycle of intergenerational violence (Victoria Family Violence Prevention Society).
- The expansion of both the award-winning Respectful Relationships violence prevention program for adolescents that is provided by Saltspring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse, and the Violence is Preventable project for children who witness abuse that is provided by the B.C./Yukon Society of Transition Houses.
- The Ministry began implementation in 2006/07 of a new initiative designed to support women who are entering or re-entering the workforce. Empowered to Work is a mentoring initiative created to address the challenges faced by women starting or changing careers, particularly women entering construction trades, small business, sciences, technology and new media sectors. 197 participants and 457 mentors participated in the program in 2006/07.

Community Partnerships

The Ministry supports revitalization in inner city communities through public, private and community partnerships, as well as providing community transition services to assist rural and remote resource-based communities manage the challenges resulting from such events as the closure of industrial operations.

- The Ministry provided $2.4 million in increased funding in 2006/07 to be invested over three years for the BladeRunners program, an industry-supported employment program that trains at-risk youth for construction jobs in B.C. In 2006/07, the program expanded to Prince George, and existing programs in Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Duncan and Ucluelet are running with high participation rates. The BladeRunners program has consistently exceeded annual targets.
- In May 2006, the sulphite mill in the Village of Port Alice reopened as Neucel Specialty Cellulose, with 280 full-time workers employed as of March 2007. The Ministry provided $0.8 million to the municipality in 2005 in lieu of tax revenue lost when the mill closed. Port Alice is in the planning stages for a new marina project to assist with economic diversification.

Seniors

The Ministry provides leadership, builds relationships, and collaborates with and informs other ministries, local, provincial and federal governments, the private sector, and community groups about issues affecting seniors. Highlights of this work during 2006/07 include:

- Providing support to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues, through to the final submission of the *Aging Well in British Columbia* report to Government on December 1, 2006. The report makes 16 recommendations to help ensure B.C.'s rapidly growing senior population continues to participate in their communities and live independent, healthy lives.
- Leading a cross government review of the *Aging Well in British Columbia* report to address the recommendations and take the province into the future.
- A new and improved edition of the BC Seniors' Guide was launched in August 2006. The guide, available in English, French, Chinese and Punjabi, provides seniors and their families with a comprehensive resource on available government programs and services. It is also available online with regular updates.
- The Ministry of Community Services also provided financial support for the toll-free BC Seniors' Line, operated by the Ministry of Health.*

* 1 800 465-4911 weekdays between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

This year the Ministry supported new and innovative programs to improve the quality of life for seniors in B.C. Examples of these programs include:

- free seniors' road safety awareness workshops, such as the British Columbia Automobile Association's Mature Driver's Program;
- expanded Memory Plus Dementia Program, provided by the Silver Threads Service, which supports participants and caregivers to learn additional coping skills; and
- training for volunteers to help seniors remain in their homes and retain a meaningful connection to the community, such as that provided by the Capital City Volunteers.

Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Community Services' mandate is to promote liveable, sustainable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. The Ministry supports this important mandate by working with communities, women's and seniors' groups, and by creating partnerships with other ministries, local and federal governments, the private sector and not for profit organizations. Additionally, the Ministry administers all or part of 19 pieces of legislation and has responsibility for the Board of Examiners, the Islands Trust Fund Board, and the Dease Lake and Atlin Advisory Planning Commissions (see Appendix A).

Local Government

The Ministry develops policy and delivers programs and services that encourage the growth and vitality of our communities. Through partnerships with First Nations, municipalities, regional districts and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), the Ministry is helping to build vibrant, connected, resilient and environmentally sustainable communities that are great places in which to live, work and invest. The Ministry is responsible for the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*, legislation which provides local governments with the powers, duties and functions that are necessary to address the needs of their communities. The Ministry supports local government in meeting citizens' needs for services by working in partnership to develop vital urban centres, improve air and water quality, enhance community safety, and renew infrastructure. The Ministry's local government grants programs support the building of healthy and vital communities, encourage active lifestyles, and foster community celebration.

The Ministry contributes to Government's commitment to the environment through its support of local governments and most community infrastructure programs in which environmental sustainability is the key consideration in funding decisions. The Ministry works to foster compact, green and sustainable communities through community planning and regional growth strategies, support for public transit infrastructure that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and improved water, air and waste management strategies. Using the funding opportunities of the Public Transit Agreement and the Public Transit Capital Trust, the Ministry develops partnerships with local governments, UBCM and the Federal government, to support the long-term growth of community sustainability throughout the province.

Women

The Ministry strives to ensure that women from all backgrounds have the opportunity to reach their greatest potential. In partnership with community-based service providers, the Ministry funds direct, essential, client-centred services for women who have experienced abuse, and their children who have witnessed abuse. The Ministry also works proactively to combat violence against women, by supporting programs that aim to create change in the attitudes and behaviors that lead to violence against women.

Through services and programs, such as the Empowered to Work mentoring initiative, the Ministry increases women's capacity to reach their economic potential.

The Ministry works with other ministries and orders of government to ensure that the unique needs of women are addressed and integrated into Government's various policies, legislation, programs and services.

Seniors

The Ministry is committed to improving the social and economic well-being of seniors in British Columbia, ensuring their continued participation in their communities, and increasing their ability to live independent, healthy lives. Providing seniors with access to information on services and programs that enhance their healthy, active and independent lives is a key strategy in achieving this goal. This information can be accessed online at: www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/seniors

The Ministry also provided support for the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues, which examined how the province could best support seniors' independence, health and continuing contributions to society. The Council submitted its *Aging Well in British Columbia* report to government on December 1, 2006.

Community Partnerships

The Ministry works with other agencies and orders of government to develop and support the implementation of solutions to inner city issues. The Inner-City Partnerships initiative manages and develops partnerships with the City of Vancouver, the City of Victoria and the City of Surrey, centres that are working to revitalize their inner city areas.

The Ministry also provides community transition services to help rural and remote, single-resource communities manage the effects of significant financial challenges that result from the scaling back or closure of industrial operations.

The Ministry works collaboratively with the Ministry of Forests and Range and the Ministry of Economic Development, to develop proactive strategies to manage the impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic on British Columbia communities.

Strategic Context

British Columbia's economy is performing at an exceptional level. Growth in GDP for 2006 is estimated to have been 3.6 per cent. The Ministry works to ensure that all British Columbians can benefit from this economic vitality, focusing on women and seniors, inner cities and rural communities.

A strong economy brings many advantages for individuals and communities. The province's economic growth in 2006/07 was accompanied by strong personal income growth and a marked drop in the unemployment rate. British Columbia is experiencing the lowest unemployment rate (4.8 per cent) and the lowest youth unemployment rate (8.2 per cent) in 30 years.[1]

This fast pace of growth, along with other factors such as the rising price of oil, has contributed to increased construction costs and labour and materials shortages. This in turn has had an impact in 2006/07 on infrastructure projects funded by the Ministry and its partners. Delays in the completion of infrastructure projects that will improve water quality and protect the environment are unintended results of British Columbia's robust economy.

The Ministry achieves much of its work in partnership with local governments, First Nations, and community organizations. Building the capacity of these partners to deliver programs and services is a key opportunity for the Ministry.

To foster vibrant, diverse communities that are great places to live, work and invest, the Ministry works to prepare for an aging population, to end violence against women in our societies, to develop environmental management strategies, and to promote healthy lifestyles.

Local Government, Communities and Cities

British Columbia has a diverse range of communities that are home to people of many different origins, cultural traditions, languages, ethnicities, and religions:

- Populations range in size from 230 people, to more than 2 million, with almost half of the province's 4.1 million people living in the Greater Vancouver area.[2]
- Between 2001 and 2006, British Columbia's population grew by 5.3 per cent, largely as a result of immigration.[3]

[1] Statistics Canada. 2007. *Labour Force Historical Review.*

[2,3] Statistics Canada. 2007. *Vancouver, British Columbia* (table). *2006 Community Profiles.* 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE.

- English, Chinese (including Cantonese and Mandarin) and Punjabi are the top three language groups.[4]
- There are 197 First Nations bands across the province.[5]

Enabling local governments to address the needs of their citizens in the smallest towns and the largest cities continues to be a challenge for the province.

Increasingly, the population in British Columbia is shifting from rural to urban areas. Urban areas are also most often the intended and actual destination for immigrants. These areas face growth-related pressures for more efficient, cost-effective services such as infrastructure renewal, public transit, air and water quality, and waste management. An additional challenge for urban areas is to implement environmental management strategies that reduce their contributions to global warming and manage urban growth. The impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation, projected to affect 80 per cent of British Columbia's interior pine forests, presents an enormous challenge in terms of community sustainability and environmental management in the province. Strategies to address and adapt to issues, such as the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation, are often most effective when implemented at the local community level.

Infrastructure renewal creates financial pressures for local governments, which traditionally rely on property taxes and user fees to fund major projects. Rural communities also face challenges providing the services their citizens need, with generally higher costs due to geographical location and limited fiscal resources. Many rural communities that have depended on natural resource industries are working to diversify their economies in light of changing market forces. These communities are directly affected by changes in commodity prices for natural resources and other international economic shifts.

Inner city areas face specific pressures, often experiencing higher rates of unemployment and homelessness, crime, drug use and prostitution than cities overall experience. The challenge to effectively address homelessness and affordable housing in inner city areas is also affected by rising real estate and construction costs.

Women

Since December 2001, the British Columbian economy has provided over 165,000 new jobs for women, and the proportion of women participating in the province's labour force has risen to 61 per cent.[6] Women are making gains in some non-traditional occupations, with the number of women working in construction trades doubling over the past five years.

[4, 5] Government of British Columbia. (n.d.). *B.C. Facts: People of British Columbia*. Retrieved June 6, 2007 from http://www.gov.bc.ca/bvprd/bc/home.do?navId=NAV_ID_province.

[6] Statistics Canada. 2007. *Labour Force Survey 2001-2006*. Table 282-0089.

Women's labour force activity and incomes are often affected by family and care-giving responsibilities. While women make up a majority of the university student population and nearly half of the province's paid workforce, approximately 30 per cent work part-time. The wage gap between men and women has been narrowing over the years, moving from 20.2 per cent in 1997 to 16.5 per cent in 2005.[7]

Women are more likely than men to be the victims of the most severe forms of spousal assault, as well as spousal homicide, sexual assault and criminal harassment (also known as stalking). Children witness spousal assault in almost 40 per cent of reported incidents. Aboriginal women are significantly more likely to experience spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women.[8]

Domestic violence and spousal homicide present serious safety concerns for women and their children in British Columbia. Many women who experience domestic violence need support to leave abusive situations and re-build their lives, with timely connections to emergency shelter, counselling, housing and employment opportunities.

Seniors

Today's seniors live longer, healthier lives and many want to continue an active lifestyle. They are often looking for opportunities to continue to participate and contribute to society, including participation in the workforce.

Seniors in British Columbia comprised 13.8 per cent of the population in 2006, and the proportion aged 65 and over is expected to rise to nearly 25 per cent by 2031.[9] As the proportion of seniors in the provincial population goes up, particularly those in the aged 80 and over demographic, demands on health and community services are expected to increase dramatically.

[7] Statistics Canada. 2007. *Labour Force Historical Review.*

[8] Statistics Canada. 2006. *Measuring Violence Against Women.*

[9] BC Stats. 2005. *Seniors Scan: Population Aged 65 and Over by Health Service Delivery Areas.*

Report on Performance

The table below provides a snapshot of the Ministry's progress with regard to its performance targets during 2006/07. The following section provides detailed discussion and explanation of these results.

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens. For greater detail see pages 17 to 19	**2006/07 Target**	**2006/07 Actual**
1.2: Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers.		
Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit.	>97%	99% ACHIEVED

Goal 2: British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities. For greater detail see pages 19 to 22	**2006/07 Target**	**2006/07 Actual**
2.1: Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability.		
Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality.	Additional 2,132,000 people with new system. 70% of total population served.	Additional 20,207 people with new system. 18.3% of total population served. NOT ACHIEVED
2.2 Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change.		
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes.	141	143 EXCEEDED

Goal 3: Communities effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens. For greater detail see pages 22 to 24	**2006/07 Target**	**2006/07 Actual**
3.2 Cooperative approaches to respond to inner city issues.		
Number of new Urban Development Agreements.	1 new	0 NOT ACHIEVED
Number of BladeRunners participants moving into employment.	135	181 EXCEEDED

Goal 4: Women are safe from domestic violence. For greater detail see pages 24 to 26	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
4.1: Strengthened community capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence.		
Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services.	11,800	12,243 EXCEEDED
Number of outreach services used by women and their children.	20,600	40,896 EXCEEDED

Goal 5: Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential. For greater detail see pages 27 to 28	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
5.1 Women have more opportunities to participate in the economy.		
Number of women (expressed as a percentage) who enter employment after participating in the Empowered to Work mentoring initiative.	N/A	56%

Goal 6: Improved social and economic well-being for seniors. For greater detail see pages 28 to 31	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
6.2 Greater awareness and understanding of issues related to an aging population.		
Number of seniors calling the 1-800 line per month.	>900	1,000 ACHIEVED
Number of Seniors' Guides distributed.	>60,000	120,437 ACHIEVED
Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website.	>31,000	95,576 ACHIEVED

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

Goal 1: Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens

In 2004, the Province enacted the *Community Charter*, legislation that recognizes municipalities as an autonomous, accountable and responsible order of government.

Objective 1.1: Local governments are open, representative, and responsive

A local government system in which citizens choose their form of governance, their elected officials and the services they receive is consistent with fundamental democratic principles. Citizens reasonably expect their local government to create the community they want to live in and to provide the services they need and desire. Elected officials who are responsive and

accountable to the electorate they represent, and local government processes that are effective, open and responsive to the changing interests of their citizens, provide communities with effective and timely governance.

Strategies

- Promote citizens' access to local governments and build their capacity to participate in local decision-making.
- Assist local governments with incorporations, amalgamations, and boundary extensions.

Objective 1.2: Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers

The *Community Charter* changed the relationship with local government from one of provincial oversight, to a model based on local accountability where locally created solutions address local issues. The flexibility provided for under the *Community Charter* increased local government capacity to respond innovatively to citizens' changing needs and desires, while at the same time ensuring appropriate accountability processes and "checks and balances" are in place.

Strategies

- Provide a modern, empowering legislative, regulatory, and policy framework.
- Support innovation and the effective use of legislative and regulatory powers.
- Facilitate constructive relationships and develop strong, mutually beneficial partnerships.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit[1]	97%	97%	>97%	99% ACHIEVED

Data Source: Local governments provide their financial data to the Ministry through the annual Local Government Data Entry (LGDE) electronic reporting process at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry's reporting requirements are comprehensive and the data received highly accurate.

[1] Liability servicing limit is equal to 25 per cent of annual own-source municipal revenue. Own-source revenue primarily includes taxes, fees, charges, penalties, fines and investment income.

Discussion of Results

Measuring the percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit demonstrates how well local governments financially plan for their capital requirements, and how well they utilize the different financing options available to them.

Local governments in British Columbia borrow money for infrastructure through the Municipal Finance Authority with the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities. These borrowings must generally fall within their individual liability servicing limits. Inspector approval of local government borrowing bylaws is based on their fiscal capacity and ability to repay the debt. This financial oversight role ensures that local governments are generally within their borrowing limits, which in turn mitigates the risk to the Municipal Finance Authority's AAA credit rating, thereby enabling local governments in the province to borrow at lower than industry rates.

In the 2006/07 fiscal year, ninety-nine per cent of local governments in British Columbia were within their liability servicing limits. This achievement is consistent with the desired outcome of ensuring that no more than three per cent of local governments fall outside of this acceptable range.

Goal 2: British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities

Objective 2.1: Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability

Communities must prepare for the current and future needs of their citizens, particularly in terms of infrastructure renewal. Major infrastructure projects are expensive and often challenge the financial capacity of both large and small local governments. Funding for infrastructure planning and capital projects by the province and federal government supports local government initiatives to improve drinking water quality and waste water treatment, enhances protection of the environment, promotes sustainability and protects public health for the benefit of all British Columbians.

The combination of aging infrastructure, population growth and public expectations are collectively creating increased demand for local government infrastructure and services. While both the federal and provincial governments have entered into tri-partite funding arrangements which respond in part to the demand, these programs are consistently oversubscribed and may not be a stable source of funding for the long-term renewal of infrastructure. Local governments are also facing market-related challenges, such as labour shortages and increased material costs, related to the planning and construction of infrastructure

works, which put additional strain on their limited fiscal resources. This means the competition for these funding dollars is increased and can result in projects not receiving funding, costing more to deliver or taking longer to complete.

Strategies

- Develop, implement, and manage the water and sewer infrastructure capital funding and infrastructure planning programs.
- Implement the federal Gas Transfer Tax Program (formerly, the New Deal for Cities and Communities) with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, to incorporate integrated sustainable planning practices into local government activities.
- Work with local governments to develop forward-looking regional strategies.
- Negotiate federal/provincial/local government infrastructure capital grant programs.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality	Additional 577,770 people with new system 16.67% of total population served	Additional 57,474 people with new system 17.8% of total population served	Additional 2,132,000 people with new system[1] 70% of total population served	Additional 20,207 people with new system 18.3% of total population served NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: Contractual requirements between the province and grant recipients include quarterly quality progress reports, tied to quarterly claim payments, which are tracked within a "grants database". Population data are provided by BC Stats and are subject to any inherent limitations.

[1] The significant increase in targeted population served was due to the anticipated completion of the Seymour-Capilano Water Filtration Plant, which will serve approximately 50 per cent of the provincial population.

Discussion of Results

Measuring the number of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards demonstrates the provincial and local government commitment to improving drinking water quality for all British Columbians. The measure is linked to emerging standards to ensure that those projects undertaken are informed by current North American regulatory standards for the treatment of surface water. In 2006/07, an additional 20,207 British Columbians were served by drinking water systems which met emerging standards through the Ministry's B.C. Community Water Improvement Program funding initiative.

Ministry Response

While there was a 0.5 per cent increase in the total number of British Columbians served by these new systems, the 2006/07 target for this measure was not achieved. Factors beyond the influence of the Ministry, such as labour and material shortages, contributed to a substantial delay in the completion of the Seymour-Capilano Water Filtration Plant, which would have served an additional 2,132,000 British Columbians. The Ministry is continuing to monitor this long-term project and it is now anticipated to be complete in 2008/09.

Objective 2.2: Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change

Local governments need both financial resources and the capacity to adapt to changing local, regional and provincial conditions. The nature of the community economy, differing levels of council, staff or regional district board expertise, and level of citizen engagement can have significant influence over how, or if, an individual community is able to adapt to changing conditions.

The Ministry contributes its expertise and targeted funding through the Small Community and Regional District Basic Grants to build local government resiliency and capacity to adapt to changing economic, social, and environmental conditions. The Ministry also plays a key role in monitoring and maintaining the integrity of the local government finance system to ensure local governments collectively have the capability to respond to unforeseen changes in the economic, social, or environmental health of their communities.

Strategies

- Collaborate with local governments and provincial agencies to provide expertise and other support to rural and resource communities in transition.
- Ensure that local governments have the fiscal capacity needed for self government.
- Promote targeted support for policing, crime prevention, and community safety.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes	141[1]	137	141	143 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Local governments provide their financial data to the Ministry through the annual Local Government Data Entry electronic reporting process at the end of their fiscal year. The Ministry's reporting requirements are comprehensive and the data received highly accurate.

[1] This figure represents 89% of municipalities in British Columbia and is based on a three-year average from 2002/03 to 2004/05.

Discussion of Results

Property taxes comprise the majority of municipalities' annual revenue. They provide the financial capacity and independence local governments need to operate effectively, provide services and respond to unforeseen events. Tracking the number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current taxes measures the robustness of local tax bases and generally serves as an early indicator of broader economic challenges, since non-payment of a substantial amount of local taxes may indicate economic weakness within the community. Those communities at risk of collecting less than 90 per cent of their taxes are generally single-resource based communities affected by larger external market forces.

In 2006/07 the target for this measure was exceeded. An additional two municipalities collected at least 90 per cent of their taxes. The achievement of the target results from the Ministry's efforts to assist communities with financial management. This assistance has included assessing and modifying their tax base and/or restructuring their boundaries in such a way as to provide additional revenue for services.

Goal 3: Communities effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens

Objective 3.1: Economically strong regions in British Columbia

Economically strong regions can effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens. British Columbia's regions are diverse in size, geography, demographics, and socio-economic status. Given this diversity, many different and targeted approaches are required to ensure economic vitality in all regions. Cooperation among federal, provincial, and local governments to best meet citizens' needs throughout British Columbia is essential for success.

Strategies

- Identify strategies to strengthen regional governance capacity to provide cost-effective services and build strong regional economies.
- Promote harmonization of local government and provincial regulatory requirements to improve the competitive nature of British Columbia's economy.

Objective 3.2: Cooperative approaches to respond to inner city issues.

The Ministry works to meet the social and economic needs of the residents of, and visitors to, inner city areas. This requires cooperative relationships among federal, provincial and local governments, businesses, and community organizations. Multi-level planning agreements are tools to further the creation of vibrant inner city communities.

Addressing inner city issues such as poverty, homelessness, unemployment, public safety, addiction, and other health issues is critical to economic revitalization. These challenges have taken decades to become established and require a long-term approach in order to make significant changes.

Strategies

- Ensure collaboration among partners to address inner city issues.
- Support the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner City Inclusive Commitments.
- Facilitate employment for at-risk youth.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of new Urban Development Agreements	1	0	1 new	0 Not Achieved

Data Source: Ministry of Community Services.

Discussion of Results

This performance measure was not achieved due to the federal government, a key partner, initiating a review of its approach to Urban Development Agreements, resulting in no new agreements being finalized in 2006/07.

In 2006, as a result of the Federal Department responsible for Western Economic Diversification's visioning process, federal participation in existing Urban Development Agreements moved to a more explicit economic focus. Western Economic Diversification will no longer cost-share projects of a socio-economic nature that are considered precursors to economic development or diversification.

Ministry Response

Due to the Federal Government's position on Urban Development Agreements, the Ministry is exploring other partnership frameworks (for example, the Surrey Urban Enrichment Initiative) to develop intergovernmental strategic relationships that benefit British Columbia communities.

The Ministry's approach will continue to be more broad-based, which will require working with individual federal departments to leverage resources for certain initiatives. The performance indicator relevant to Urban Development Agreements has been discontinued in the Ministry's performance management reporting structure for 2007/08.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of BladeRunners participants moving into employment	78	167	135	181[1] EXCEEDED

Data Source: Third-party service providers collect data and are required by contract to submit quarterly statistical reports to the Ministry.

[1] This represents a success rate of 88 per cent (206 total participants).

Discussion of Results

BladeRunners was established in 1994 in Vancouver and is delivered through a third-party contract model with not-for-profit organizations. These organizations provide strong local connections, especially with the Aboriginal community, enabling the high success rate in attracting and working with at-risk youth to place them in long-term construction-based employment.

The performance measure related to the number of participants moving into employment was exceeded. Of the 206 individuals who participated in the BladeRunners program in 2006/07, 181 (88 per cent of participants) moved into employment.

BladeRunners exceeded its 2006/07 target due to a planned expansion into Prince George that developed faster than expected, as well as two new delivery agents (Métis Nation BC and Nuu-cha-nulth Employment and Training Board) increasing their performance levels.

Ministry Response

No adjustment to programming is planned as a result of exceeding the target for 2006/07.

Goal 4: Women are safe from domestic violence

Objective 4.1: Strengthened community capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence

Women are more likely than men to be the victims of the most severe forms of spousal assault, as well as spousal homicide, sexual assault and criminal harassment (also known as stalking). The Ministry has increased funding for community-based services including safe shelter, crisis intervention, emergency counselling and referral to other services and programs.

These community programs are demand-driven, which impacts on the accuracy of forecasting actual numbers of women and children accessing the services.

Strategies

- Provide temporary shelter to women and their children leaving abusive relationships.
- Provide counselling to women who have experienced domestic violence, and their children.
- Reach out to women at risk of, or recovering from, domestic violence.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services	11,150[1]	12,466[2]	11,800	12,243 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Third-party service providers collect data and are required by contract to submit monthly and quarterly statistical reports to the Ministry. An information management system allows online data entry by service providers.

[1] Represents a three-year average from 2002/03 to 2004/05.

[2] Increase due to a funding increase in 2005/06.

Discussion of Results

Transition house services, safe homes and second stage housing programs provide safe, supported, temporary shelter for women and their dependent children who are fleeing abuse. Measuring the number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services is an indicator of community capacity to respond to domestic violence. The measure is responsive to service demand, which can increase as a result of enhancing the profile of services through community education and presentations. The target assumes a consistent rate of utilization and was based on data submitted by service providers during the first quarter, 2006/07 for an estimated annual total.

Ministry Response

No change in programming is planned as a result of exceeding this target.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of outreach services used by women and their children [1]	N/A[2]	16,819	20,600	40,896 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Third-party service providers collect data and are required by contract to submit monthly statistical reports to the Ministry. An information management system allows online data entry by service providers.

[1] The description of this measure has been revised to reflect the level of service use rather than individuals served. In 2006/07, 14,891 individuals used these services.

[2] This was a new measure in 2005/06; therefore data are not available for 2004/05.

Discussion of Results

Outreach Services help women identify and access the services they need, and educate communities about the issue of violence against women. Service use is the performance measure being assessed for this program. The measure is responsive to service demand, which can increase as a result of enhancing the profile of the services, generated through community education and presentations. Generally an individual will access approximately three outreach services per reporting period. In 2006/07, almost 15,000 individuals used the services, which include such activities as counselling, accompaniment to appointments, and legal system support. Services can also involve connecting women to longer term supports such as employment, housing, and treatment.

The target assumes a consistent rate of use and was based on data submitted by service providers during the first quarter of 2006/07 for an estimated annual total. Outreach Services funding was increased significantly by the Ministry in 2005/06 and became fully deployed throughout 2006/07 as 44 new Outreach Services programs were added for a total of 55, resulting in improved access to services and support for vulnerable women in multiple communities. This in turn led to significant increases in the number of services used by women at risk of abuse, or recovering from abuse, and their children.

Ministry Response

No change in programming is planned as a result of exceeding this target.

Goal 5: Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential

Objective 5.1: Women have more opportunities to participate in the economy.

Providing women with opportunities to reach their highest economic potential benefits women, their families, and the economy in general. The Empowered to Work initiative supports the development and implementation of mentoring models that increase opportunities for women to enter into the workforce or transition into new employment/self-employment. Mentoring has been identified as a key strategy to increase women's capacity to participate in the province's economy.

The Ministry has successfully partnered with two other ministries (Economic Development and Small Business and Revenue) to develop mentoring projects for women that focus on career development in the trades, sciences, technology and new media.

Challenges to achieving the objective include any downward trend in the economy at the international, national or provincial level which may negatively impact markets and businesses across the province.

Strategy

- Design and implement a mentoring initiative for women entering or re-entering the paid labour force.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of women who enter employment after participating in the Empowered to Work mentoring initiative (expressed as a percentage)	N/A[1]	N/A (Initiative designed and implemented)	Establish Baseline[2]	56%

Data Source: Data are collected by third-party service providers and submitted to the Ministry.

[1] Initiative is new; therefore there are no data for 2004/05.

[2] Only two of the four projects have been completed. Baseline will be determined based on full complement of mentoring projects that will be fully implemented in 2007/08.

Discussion of Results

The mentoring initiative is still in its pilot stage. However, interest in Empowered to Work has been significant, with 197 participants and 457 mentors involved in 2006/07. These mentoring projects include one-on-one, group and peer mentoring, involving a wide range of women and different industries.

Four mentoring projects were funded in 2005/06 and commenced activities in fiscal year 2006/07. Two of the projects completed within 2006/07 reported an average of 56 per cent of program participants securing employment. The remaining two projects have not completed implementation as they require further research and development. As complete data are not yet available, a performance baseline will be developed once all the mentoring projects have been delivered.

Goal 6: Improved social and economic well-being for seniors

Objective 6.1: Support to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues

The Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues was established in October 2005, and was tasked with examining two key issues: how to support seniors' ability to continue as contributing members of society; and how to support seniors' independence and health. In December 2006, the Council submitted its report, *Aging Well in British Columbia,* to the Premier. The Report makes 16 recommendations in five key areas. These recommendations will provide direction for the province in addressing seniors' issues over the next number of years. The Ministry, working in partnership with other ministries, is leading the review of the recommendations.

The need to ensure adequate input from different geographic regions of the province was one of the challenges that the Council worked hard to address. As well, the Council worked diligently to ensure that a comprehensive array of topics that related to its mandate was covered within a prescribed time frame.

Strategies

- Lead and coordinate Government support for the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues.

Objective 6.2: Greater awareness and understanding of issues related to an aging population

Understanding the unique needs of an aging population is critical to helping individuals, organizations and communities address seniors' issues and contribute to their participation in their communities. The work of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues was a key part of this effort.

Strategies

- Build awareness and understanding of issues related to planning for an aging population.
- Provide seniors with access to information.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	Baseline	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of seniors calling the 1-800 line per month	900[1]	936	>900	1,000 ACHIEVED

Data Source: Ministry of Health.

[1] Represents the average number of calls per month to the 1-800 Seniors Information Line from its inception in March 2005 to October 2005.

Discussion of Results

This measure identifies the number of calls to the Seniors Information Line ("InfoLine") for information about government programs and services. As a result of the information they receive, callers will have an increased awareness of available services, how to access them, and ultimately, increased well-being.

The impact of the Seniors Information Line is larger than indicated as this measure does not include calls from families and caregivers regarding seniors' issues. The InfoLine was launched in March 2005, and the baseline reflects the average monthly calls received from seniors during the first seven months of operation. The target for 2006/07 was surpassed, partly as a result of the interest and awareness generated with the release of the report of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	Baseline	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of Seniors' Guides distributed	60,000 [1]	60,000	>60,000	120,437 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Community Services and Ministry of Health.

[1] 60,000 Seniors' Guides were produced in 2005. All of these guides were distributed.

Discussion of Results

"Helping Seniors Live Well — BC Seniors' Guide 8th Edition" is a widely used resource guide detailing provincial and federal programs of particular relevance to seniors that is available in English, French, Chinese and Punjabi. This measure, identifying the number of print copies of the Guide distributed, shows that the Ministry is providing a useful resource for seniors, as many do not have access to electronic media. These Guides were distributed where seniors (and their families and caregivers) attend for services and recreation. In addition to the printed copies reported for this measure, 68,903 Guides were downloaded from the Ministry website in 2006/07.

Ministry Response

Interest in the Guide has increased over the years and the Ministry responded with a larger printing of the 8th edition to include more languages, thereby exceeding the 2006/07 target.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	Baseline	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website	31,000 [1]	31,000	>31,000	95,576 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Community Services.

[1] Represents the number of visits in 2005. Data before 2005 are not available.

Discussion of Results

The number of visits per year to the Seniors' website has continued to increase since its launch in 2004. A baseline of 31,000 visits per year was established, based on the number of visits in 2005. The number of visits to the Seniors' website is an indicator of information inquiries, and provides the Ministry with a measure of the usefulness of this electronic resource. The intended outcome is that greater access to information will enhance Seniors' opportunities to identify programs and services that will maintain, or increase, their active participation in society.

The actual visits to the website were more than triple the target for 2006/07. The average number of site visits a month to the website has increased steadily since its launch in 2004, and the significant increase in visits in 2006/07 was a result of the release of the final report of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues in December 2006.

Ministry Response

The Ministry will continue to update and provide material to the website to ensure that it meets the needs of British Columbia seniors and their families.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

	2006/2007 Estimated	Other Authorizations [1]	2006/2007 Total Estimated	2006/2007 Actual	Variance (Actual minus Total Estimated)
Operating Expenses ($000)					
Local Government	181,044	3,306	184,350	185,190	840
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	52,435	0	52,435	51,483	(952)
Executive and Support Services	7,784	0	7,784	7,441	(343)
Sub-Total	**241,263**	**3,306**	**244,569**	**244,114**	**(455)**
Adjustment of Prior Year's Accrual	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(212)**	**(212)**
Total	**241,263**	**3,306**	**244,569**	**243,902**	**(667)**
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
Local Government	91	0	91	87	(4)
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	37	0	37	34	(3)
Executive and Support Services	70	0	70	72	2
Total	**198**	**0**	**198**	**193**	**(5)**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)					
Local Government	700	0	700	367	(333)
Women's, Seniors' and Community Services	700	0	700	221	(479)
Executive and Support Services	580	0	580	196	(384)
Total	**1,980**	**0**	**1,980**	**784**	**(1,196)**

[1] "Other Authorizations" includes access to Contingencies (All Ministries) and New Programs Vote of $811,000 for Negotiated Framework funding, and $2,495,443 for the 2006/07 component of the new LocalMotion program.

Resource Summary

Ministry Overview

Government transfers to service partners accounted for 92.5 per cent of gross expenditures before internal and external recoveries. Most of these transfers support local governments, as well as funding prevention and intervention services for women and their children fleeing abuse. Salary and benefit costs for employees accounted for 4.9 per cent of Ministry expenditures, and other operating costs (i.e., information technology, building occupancy costs, and office expenses) accounted for the balance (2.6 per cent).

Core Business Area Descriptions

Local Government

This business area provides funds to support local governments and other related organizations as they address community needs through powers provided by the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*. This includes development of growth strategies in collaboration with regional districts; incorporations, amalgamations and municipal boundary extensions; planning and development of capital sewer and water infrastructure projects; provision of municipal services in the University Endowment Lands; and the facilitation of productive relationships among local governments, provincial agencies and First Nations.

On October 10, 2000, the provincial and federal governments signed the Canada-British Columbia Infrastructure Program Agreement. The contract (which expires on March 31, 2008) represents a $265.5 million commitment for the Province, and is intended to improve urban and local government infrastructure, such as water and waste-water systems, cultural and recreational facilities, and the energy efficiency of municipal buildings.

The timing of expenditures under this program is subject to many different factors, including timing of design and construction of infrastructure projects. As a result, annual expenditures fluctuate. In 2006/07, more work than anticipated was completed on these projects, resulting in a variance of approximately $0.84 million over the Local Government sub-vote. The Ministry funded this pressure internally.

Women's, Seniors' and Community Services

Funding in this business area helps form part of the social safety net in B.C. communities, including programs for women who have experienced abuse and children who witness abuse, and public education and partnership initiatives that aim to reduce violence against women. The Ministry also establishes government, community and corporate partnerships to support

community revitalization; provides policy analysis, research and information to government on women's and seniors' issues; and works with other jurisdictions in Canada to promote women's and seniors' interests and provide information to the public.

This business area also leads and coordinates the provincial government's work to address issues facing communities in transition. Expenditures under this program fluctuate based upon the economic conditions of resource-dependant local governments. In 2006/07, program funding requests were relatively minor, resulting in a variance of approximately $0.95 million under this business area's budget.

Executive and Support Services

This business area consists of the Minister's Office, Deputy Minister's Office and Management Services. The primary function of Management Services is to develop infrastructure and internal systems that support Ministry programs and contribute to improving service delivery capabilities. This includes a sound set of procedures and guidelines, strong financial and reporting systems, effective use of technology, and most importantly, employees who are innovative, flexible, proactive and take pride in their work. There is no significant contributing factor to the under-expenditure of $0.34 million in Executive and Support Services. Relatively minor savings were generated in various areas of expenditure.

Capital Budget

Approximately 95 per cent of the Ministry's capital funding envelope is earmarked for information technology assets to maintain client-centred service delivery, make the most effective use of resources, and expand operational efficiencies. During 2006/07, actual expenditures for information technology were significantly less than anticipated due to project delays resulting from changes in system scope and design on the Ministry's two key system projects. The Ministry does not anticipate similar savings in 2007/08.

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Seniors
www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/seniors

Women's Services
www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/womens_services

Annual Service Plan Report Appendix

Appendix A

Ministry Organizational Chart

— www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/Ministry/org_chart

Ministry of Community Services Key Legislation

— www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/Ministry/legislation

Agencies, Boards and Commissions

— www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/Ministry/agencies_boards_commissions